



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION**

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## **DCR Fire Officials Urge Caution this Weekend**

### *High Temps and Dry Conditions Elevate Dangers of Fire across State*

**BOSTON** – May 8, 2015 - With high temperatures, lack of measurable rain, and low relative humidity levels, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) officials are cautioning citizens that a brush fire can easily ignite under current conditions. An improperly extinguished camp fire, like the one that started the Clarksburg State Park brush fire last week, can easily become a danger to the state's natural habitat.

"While warm and dry weather conditions are great for outdoor activities in our forests and parks, they also raise the risk of the spread of fire," said DCR Commissioner Carol Sanchez. "We're asking the public to use caution during these very dry conditions. The impacts of human-caused forest fires can last for decades and can permanently change the way these lands are managed for public use."

The recent fire in the Clarksburg State Park burned 272 acres and took the efforts of over 65 firefighters from both DCR and local town fire departments. It took crews five days to fully contain the fire. Dried leaves and fallen branches can create an extremely potent fuel for an escaped campfire, like the one that caused the fire in Clarksburg.

"Conditions are not expected to improve over the weekend," said DCR Chief Fire Warden Dave Celino. "Present weather conditions have led to extremely dry fuel conditions."

This recent pattern of very high fire danger has resulted in a daily increase in the number of wildland fires across the state. Since Monday, there have been on average 40+ wildland fires reported per day, and with no expected measurable rainfall until next week, those numbers are expected to continue.

Department of Conservation and Recreation Fire officials are urging residents to take precautions while enjoying their planned upcoming weekend activities. Be extra careful while enjoying campfires and barbecuing.

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Carol Sanchez, the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the wellbeing of all. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit [www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr). Contact us at [mass.parks@state.ma.us](mailto:mass.parks@state.ma.us).

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